

RE United States v Hugo Betancur

Criminal No - 00-10215-REK

sentencing date: May 14, 2003.

To: Honorable Judge Robert E. Keeton  
1 Court House Way Suite 3130  
Boston, MA 02210

Your Honor

First, let me begin by thanking you for taking the time to read this letter. My name is Hugo Betancur and I am going to be sentenced by your honor. My purpose in writing this letter is to let you know more about myself, who I am, and what I feel, I don't know if by this point it really matters but I do hope you believe that I am sincere.

Your Honor I have been incarcerated for over four years, that may not be enough time to punish me as I deserve but it has been sufficient time for me to reflect on my life, to look back and understand why I became the person who committed the crime and to look at myself in the present knowing that I am not that person anymore.

Your honor when I first got involved with drugs I was young and immature but most of all I was a coward who was afraid to stand up against people that I loved like my father and my uncle to tell them that I did not need to be like them to win their love and approval or to make them proud, but before I knew it I found myself right in the middle of their world and began acting like one of them. Many times I tried to quit from everything but I was still a coward who would panic when I was told of how disappointed they would be and how dangerous it was for someone like me who knew so much about their organization to just quit on them and their associates.

That was my life until I got arrested and started to face the consequences of my actions. At that moment there were two factors that began changing my life. The first one was the loneliness I felt as I found myself without my wife and children, the second one was that I was placed in a cell with a cellmate who was a drug addict. He was suffering a great deal from his addiction and I realized that I was somehow responsible for his misery. From that moment on I understood that I deserved a punishment. I still think about that inmate everyday.

Your honor you represent the society I failed that is why I apologize to you for my behavior, I am ashamed by it, beyond it's illegality I have hurt my innocent wife and deprived my children of my company. I have hurt so many people that I Love so deeply.

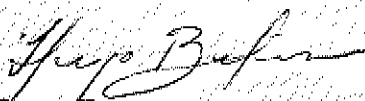
Within me I have the need to amend the damage that I caused, that is why I went against everything related to drugs, including members of my family by trying to help the government. This gave me some peace on my conscience but it also brought a whole new set of problems to my loved ones especially my wife and children. It also ostracized me from my extended family, as to my fathers side I am a traitor and to my mother's side I am an irresponsible that has made them subject to threats. All that I have left is Paula, my wife, and our three children. They are my only hope to make it right as a human being. The Love that this family shares has made it possible for our family to survive all these years but now they need me more than ever. My wife is a very strong woman but the task of raising three children that need special attention, plus the economic burden is just too much.

Your honor I know that there is a price to pay for my past but it kills me day after day to see that it is my family that is paying it as well, especially when I know that I can do so much for them.

I understand that you must use the guidelines to sentence me but I also know that those same guidelines allow you to be compassionate. There are many difficult issues to be resolved at my sentence but I am in complete trust in your wisdom and experience.

I will receive any sentence that you impose on me with great respect, contrition and self-reproach because I know that I am very guilty but I also want you to know that I am very ready to be a father, a husband, and a good citizen again.

Sincerely,

  
Hugo Betancur